

38. The apparatus of claim 36, wherein the container for a beverage aging wood product is an interchangeable cartridge connectable to the closed system by an inlet port and an outlet port.

39. The apparatus of claim 38, further comprising a flush tank and piping configured to flush said wood product after a processing run.

40. The apparatus of claim 36, wherein said beverage is an ethanolic beverage.

41. The apparatus of claim 36, wherein said beverage is a brown distilled spirit.

42. The apparatus of claim 36, wherein said beverage is Bourbon, Scotch, Irish, rye, Canadian or other whiskey, rum, tequila, brandy, cognac, armagnac, liqueur, mescal, eau de vie, aguardiente, or shogu (shouchuu).

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claims 15-19 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. New claims 24-42 have been added. Claims 24-42 are currently in the case.

Election

The Examiner in the case issued a Restriction Requirement, dividing the claims into 2 groups:

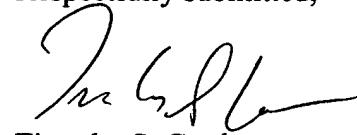
Group I, drawn to a mature beverage produced in the apparatus; and

Group II, drawn to a flavor transfer cartridge (apparatus).

Applicants elect, without traverse, to prosecute claims drawn to the apparatus for processing beverages, which would fall within Group II. It is Applicants' belief that all the currently pending claims fall within the elected group.

If the Examiner has any questions or comments that would help progress the present claims to allowance, a telephone call to the undersigned representative is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



Timothy S. Corder
Reg. No. 38,414
Agent for Applicants

Vinson & Elkins L.L.P.
2300 First City Tower
1001 Fannin
Houston, Texas 77002-6760
512/542-8446

Date: November 6, 2002